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Chairman Neal, Ranking Member Brady, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony related to your May 27, 2020 hearing on the Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19 on Communities of Color.

I write today on behalf of Ong & Associates, a public interest research group.

We have conducted a number of studies related to COVIDnomics, or the economic, health and housing impact of COVID-19 on Los Angeles, and on communities of color.

No doubt you've received testimony and documents related to the Black, Latinx, First American/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander, and Asian American communities, and have selected three of our studies that shine a light on the impact COVID-19 has on Asian American and other communities of color. These policy briefs focus on the social determinants of health, and the economic impact of COVID-19.

1. Parts of Los Angeles Hit Hardest by COVID-19 Also Among Those Where Census Response Lags.

UCLA Analysis shows "extreme undercount" shaping up in low-income and minority neighborhoods (May 12, 2020)

<https://knowledge.luskin.ucla.edu/2020/05/12/census-response-lags/>

In Los Angeles County, the 2020 Census Response rate lags 11 points behind the 2010 Census Response Rate. The communities whose 2020 response rates are lagging 2010 rates the most — 29 percentage points on average — include lower-income neighborhoods in Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles, a majority of South Los Angeles, the Harbor area and Van Nuys. Within Los Angeles' urban core are Koreatown, Chinatown, and Thai Town, and in Long Beach, Cambodia-town. When we compared the census response data to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's tally of COVID-19 cases, we found those immigrant-rich areas are also among the places with the greatest numbers of people with coronavirus.

This is relevant because the Census is used to allocate billions of dollars for health services. (See: <https://censuscounts.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Census-Health-Care-Factsheet.pdf>).

2. Left Behind During a Global Pandemic: An Analysis of LA County Neighborhoods at Risk of Not Receiving COVID-19 Individual Rebates Under the CARES Act (April 12, 2020).

<https://latino.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/LPPI-CNK-Brief-2-with-added-notes-res.pdf>

Neighborhoods with the highest proportion of residents most at risk of not receiving a stimulus payment are concentrated in Downtown Los Angeles, including Westlake/MacArthur Park, Koreatown, Chinatown, Skid Row, and Pico-Union, in addition to the following neighborhoods: South Central, Hollywood, Long Beach, East Hollywood, and Glendale.

There is a companion NBC OpEd: Coronavirus Checks Aren't Coming for Many in America's Latino and Asian Communities. It is imperative that states take the lead to ensure no one is left out of the recovery.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/coronavirus-checks-aren-t-coming-many-america-s-latino-asian-ncna1188976>

3. COVID-19 & High Risk Workers by Neighborhood in Los Angeles (April 1, 2020):

<https://luskin.ucla.edu/latino-asian-american-neighborhoods-at-high-economic-risk-new-ucla-report-finds>

This policy brief identifies neighborhoods with high concentrations of workers at risk of unemployment. Nearly 60% of Latino-majority neighborhoods and 40% of Asian-majority neighborhoods will be economically affected by COVID-19, while 12% of white-majority neighborhoods will face the same level of economic disruption. The report includes recommendations for state and local officials to support low-wage workers in Los Angeles County.

Other studies related to COVID can be found at the UCLA Center for Neighborhood Knowledge: <https://knowledge.luskin.ucla.edu/news/>

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. We thank the Committee for investigating the issue of racial and ethnic health disparities during the COVID-19 pandemic and hope that this hearing spurs Congress to take action to advance equity.

Respectfully,


Elena Ong